



IDAHO STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION



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IDAHO OUTPACES NATION IN STUDENTS TAKING SAT

BOISE – Idaho outpaced the nation in the percentage of students taking the SAT, a college entrance exam.

The state began offering the SAT to all high school juniors at no cost to their families in Spring 2012. Today, the College Board, which administers the SAT, released nationwide results for the Class of 2013, showing Idaho as one of only three states that provides every student with the opportunity to take the SAT college entrance exam before they graduate from high school. Maine and Delaware are the other two states that test all students on the SAT. Idaho's first-ever SAT School Day was administered in April 2012 to more than 16,000 high school juniors, the graduating Class of 2013.

Those graduates are the first cohort of students who completed the more rigorous graduation requirements adopted by the State Board of Education in 2008. These additional requirements included three years of math, including math during the senior year, three years of science, a senior project and the college entrance exam. This cohort's data is publicized in the College Board's national report released today and can be compared with students in other states.

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This school year, the number of high school juniors in Idaho's public schools participating in Idaho's SAT School Day increased to more than 17,000.

"Through Idaho SAT School Day, we are offering all high school students equal access to an unprecedented opportunity to take a college entrance exam at no cost to them or their families. Few states offer this to their students, and I am proud Idaho has made it available to every junior in public high school," Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Luna said. "In addition to offering the SAT, the state also is providing students with the support they need to better prepare for postsecondary education and the workforce by raising our academic standards, giving high school sophomores the chance to take the PSAT voluntarily, and incentivizing students to take AP exams or dual credit courses before they graduate."

"Ensuring that high school graduates are college and career ready is a critical first step to meeting the State Board's goal to see that 60 percent of Idaho citizens between the ages of 25-34 attain a postsecondary degree or certificate by 2020," said Don Soltman, President of the Idaho State Board of Education. "Providing students with the opportunity to take a college entrance exam helps them identify areas where they need additional preparation."

Idaho students must take a college entrance exam – either the SAT or ACT – before they graduate from high school, and the SAT is paid for by the state. The results of the exams are used by the state and local school districts to help better prepare students for postsecondary education and the workforce.

In the first year of the statewide SAT, about one in four Idaho students met college- and career-ready benchmarks set by the SAT. Students in Maine and Delaware had similar average scores compared to students in Idaho. In Idaho, the average score for the Class of 2013 was 451 in critical reading, 456 in mathematics and 449 in writing. A score of 500 in each subject area has shown a student will be successful in postsecondary education after high school.

In Idaho, the state has put additional resources in place to help teachers prepare students to meet college- and career-ready benchmarks before they graduate from high school. In 2011, the state adopted the Common Core State Standards as Idaho's Core Standards in mathematics and English language arts. The higher academic standards are being implemented this school year across all grades to ensure every student graduates from high school prepared to go on to postsecondary education.

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The Idaho Legislature also approved additional funding this year to provide every high school sophomore the opportunity to take the PSAT. Scores from the PSAT will aid districts in determining the appropriate course or Advanced Placement (AP) options for those students who participate. In turn, when acted on appropriately, schools can use PSAT data to help increase SAT scores the following year.

For more information on Idaho SAT School Day, including results by district, visit <http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/assessment/collegeEntranceExam.htm>.

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Editor's Note: Please be aware that these results reflect the results of the Class of 2013, or high school juniors who took the SAT in April 2012. This data does not reflect the most recent Idaho SAT School Day that was administered in Spring 2013.